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REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments above and in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

As a preliminary matter, Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 38 and 39.

Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the signed PTO-1449 forms for the IDSs filed on August 30, 2002, June 14, 2002 and April 16, 2002 that were returned with the Office Action. However, item AI in the PTO-1449 form for the IDS filed on April 16, 2002 has not been initialed by the Examiner. That is, WO00/54413, published September 14, 2000, was listed in the PTO-1449 form filed on April 16, 2002, as item AI, but has not been initialed.

A copy of the PTO-1449 form filed on April 16, 2002 is attached to this response for the Examiner's convenience in locating WO00/54413 in the file. Applicants respectfully request that WO00/54413 be considered with regard to the pending claims and that a copy of the attached PTO-1449 form initialed and signed by the Examiner be returned to Applicants.

Objection to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to Figures 1-3, noting that these Figures should be designated by a legend such as "Prior Art." The specification, however, fails to identify that the systems illustrated in Figures 1-3 constitute either the work of another or qualify as "prior art" available under the statutory categories of 35 U.S.C. § 102. Discussion of Figures 1-3 is provided solely for the purpose of describing

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foundational principles leading to the development of the embodiments of the present invention. To the extent that the subject matter illustrated in Figures 1-3 is related to embodiments of the present invention, Applicants hereby amend Figures 1-3 to be designated by the legend "Related Art" and attach replacement sheets of Figures 1-3 showing the same. In no way, however, does the present amendment to Figures 1-3 constitute an admission that the systems illustrated in Figures 1-3 constitute "prior art" with respect to the pending claims. See M.P.E.P. § 2129. Accordingly, withdrawal of the present drawing objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Doucet et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,348,986).

By the present amendment, Applicants hereby incorporate the subject matter of claim 38, indicated as allowable, into claims 1 and 23. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present rejection is moot and that claims 1 and 23 are in condition for immediate allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 2-5, 8-18, and 21-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Doucet et al.

Claims 2-5, 8-16, 24-29, 31, and 32 variously depend from claims 1 and 23. As discussed above, claims 1 and 23 are in immediate condition for allowance due to their incorporation of allowable subject matter recited within claim 38. Accordingly, claims 2-5, 8-16, and 24-29 are also in immediate condition for allowance by virtue of their various dependence from claims 1 and 23.

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By the present amendment, Applicants hereby incorporate the allowable subject matter recited in claim 38 into claims 17 and 30. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present rejection is moot and that claims 17 and 30, in addition to their various dependent claims 18, 21, 22, 33, and 34, are in condition for immediate allowance.

Claims 35-37, 40, and 41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Doucet et al. in view of Arnold et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,347,001).

Claims 35-37, 40, and 41 depend from claim 30. As discussed above, claim 30 is in immediate condition for allowance due to its incorporation of allowable subject matter recited within claim 38. Accordingly, claims 35-37, 40, and 41 are also in immediate condition for allowance by virtue of their dependence from claim 30.

Claims 6, 7, 19, and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Doucet et al. in view of Medved et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,671,436).

Claims 6, 7, 19, and 20 variously depend from claims 1 and 17. As discussed above, claims 1 and 17 are in immediate condition for allowance due to their incorporation of allowable subject matter recited within claims 1 and 17. Accordingly, claims 6, 7, 19, and 20 are also in immediate condition for allowance by virtue of their various dependence from claims 1 and 17.

No Fees Believed to be Due

No fees are believed to be due to file this response.

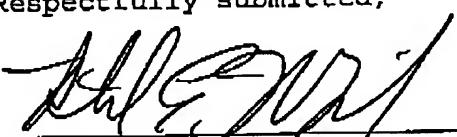
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CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the above amendment and remarks place the pending claims in a condition for allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. However, should there remain any outstanding issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Richard E. Wawrzyniak at (858) 552-1311 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

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